REMARKS

Claims 1-11 are all the claims pending in the application.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for initialing the references listed on form PTO-1449 submitted with the Information Disclosure Statement filed on November 14, 2001.

I. Foreign Priority

Applicant also thanks the Examiner for acknowledging the claim to foreign priority and for confirming that the certified copy of the priority document was received.

Applicant is submitting herewith a certified translation of Applicant's foreign priority document, thereby perfecting a claim to priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).

II. Objection to the Specification

The Examiner has objected to the specification because the specification does not contain proper headings. Applicant has hereby amended the headings and accordingly requests the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the objection.

III. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Guillen, et al. (EP Patent Publication No. 1225672 A1) in view of Applicant's Own Admission and Floessel et al. (U.S. Patent No. 3, 916, 081). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection on the following basis.

Applicant submits that the Examiner's reliance on the Guillen reference is misplaced because the Guillen reference does not qualify as prior art under any subsection of 35 U.S.C. §

102. United States law limits the prior art date of foreign patent publications to their publication date.

The Guillen reference is a European Patent Publication and thus the filing date of the Guillen reference (i.e., January 1, 2001) cannot be used as the prior art date under 35 U.S.C. § 102. Rather, the publication date of the Guillen reference qualifies as the prior art date. The publication date of the Guillen reference is July 24, 2002.

The present application was filed on October 5, 2001. Thus, the filing date of the present application (October 5, 2001) predates the prior art date (i.e., the publication date of July 24, 2002) of the Guillen reference. Therefore, the Guillen reference does not qualify as prior art under section 35 U.S.C. § 102.

Based on the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that the prior art rejection over the combination of Guillen, Applicant's Own Admission, and Floessel is improper. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 1-11 be withdrawn.

In addition, the Notice of References Cited (Form PTO-892) supplied by the Examiner lists January, 2001 as the prior art date for the Guillen reference. Based on the discussion above, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner submit a substitute Notice of References Cited with the next Office paper which accurately reflects the prior art date of the Guillen reference as July, 2002.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which

the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Submitted herewith is a Petition For Extension Of Time.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE

Date: April 22, 2003

APPENDIX

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

The specification is changed as follows:

At page 1, line 3, replace the heading with the following new heading:

[FIELD] BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

At page 1, line 27, replace the heading with the following new heading:

[OBJECTS AND] SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

At page 2, line 28, replace the heading with the following new heading:

[MORE] DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

IN THE CLAIMS:

The claims are amended as follows:

1[/]. (Amended) A gas-insulated multi-phase line made up of sections, each of which is formed by metal cladding filled with a dielectric gas under pressure and containing at least three phase conductors disposed in a triangle configuration, wherein two adjacent sections are connected together via a connection module whose metal cladding is locally made up of a plurality of tubular portions, each of which is filled with dielectric gas and has a single phase conductor passing through it, constituting a passive electrical connection.

2[/]. (Amended) The gas-insulated line of claim 1, in which the connection module is open at both ends so that the volumes of said sections communicate with each other.

3[/]. (Amended) The gas-insulated line of claim 1, in which the connection module is closed in gastight manner by one or more insulators at either or both of its ends so as to isolate two adjacent sections from each other, or so as to isolate said module from said sections.

4[/]. (Amended) A connection module for a gas-insulated electricity line of claim 1, which connection module has metal cladding made up of a first dish-shaped end cap and of a second dish-shaped end cap, which caps are provided with orifices of aperture determined to enable phase conductors to pass through them with a sufficient isolation distance between each conductor and the cladding, and in which connection module each of the tubular portions of said cladding of the module is formed of a link tube surrounding an orifice in the first end cap and an orifice in the second end cap, through which orifices the same phase conductor passes.

5[/]. (Amended) The connection module of claim 4, and in which one end cap is extended by said link tubes thereby forming an integrally-molded single piece therewith.

6[/]. (Amended) The connection module of claim 4, and in which the tubular portions are mutually parallel.

7[/]. (Amended) The connection module of claim 6 in which three tubular portions are disposed in an equilateral triangle configuration.

8[/]. (Amended) The connection module of claim 4, in which each of the tubular portions is surrounded by a determined volume of air.

9[/]. (Amended) The connection module of claim 4, in which windings forming the secondary of a current transformer are disposed in air around respective ones of said tubular portions.

10[/]. (Amended) The connection module of claim 4, in which sensors are disposed in air around or in the vicinity of respective ones of said tubular portions.

11[/]. (Amended) A method of assembling a connection module of claim 9, in which method each winding is firstly put in place around a tubular portion before the two end caps are assembled together via said tubular portions for forming the metal cladding of said module.